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Gen. U. S. Grant

“In the

Trenches ✱

✱ Before

Vicksburg”



RIEF HISTORY

... OF ...

P. H. Balling's

ORIGINAL OIL PAINTING OF

General Lysses Grant

"In the Trenches Before Vicksburg"

...AND A DESCRIPTION OF...

Jas. Fagan's Magnificent Etching

...

HERMAN LINDE, ART PUBLISHER,

NEW YORK, 31 NASSAU ST.

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211 Massachusetts Avenue.

Washington D.C.

Feb'y 9th 99

W. Linde

Dear Sir

I have with great
pleasure seen the
fine portrait of
General Grant in
the trenches before
Vicksburg printed
by Balling, of which
picture you are the
possessor, showing

The General life-
size, standing in
in the trenches,
cigar in hand and
his field glasses
lying near on a
map —

The General looks
care worn and weary
and the picture
I think truly por-
trays him as he
looked at that time
The pose is good

The earnest-look he wears
reminds most forcibly of that
sad summer — very sincerely

Julia D. Grant

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,

Washington.

October 14, 1897.

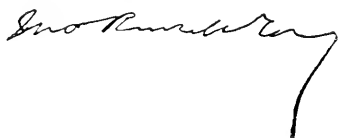
MY DEAR GRANT:—

I have your letter of the 12th, enclosing me photograph of the picture of your father. It seems a striking picture, although, of course, the original is much more faithful than this copy. I like the pose very much and the earnestness of the face. I will keep the engraving and file it away, and when the time comes, do my best to secure the picture for the Library.

We are all well, although the adjustment of the Library has been a very serious summer's work.

Remember me to all at home, and believe me

Ever yours affectionately,



HON. FREDERICK D. GRANT,
No. 25 E. 62d St., New York.

Mr Lincoln

Dear sir:
The above is in reply to a letter I wrote to Mr Young enclosing him the photograph you requested me to send
Frederick D Grant

CHRISTIANIA, NORWAY, April 19, 1898.

Prof. HERMANN LINDE, Pittsburg, Pa

MY DEAR SIR:—

Let me first thank you for the good photo of my portrait of Grant, with his slouch hat, in the trenches before Vicksburg. It is strikingly like him, too, as I remember him sitting by the camp-fire before his tent at City Point Headquarters, the day we returned from Fort Harrison, when he inspired me by telling me of his meeting with Sherman and the work around Vicksburg. You know that I asked him that day to do me the favor to take Richmond while I was his guest at City Point, and that he took but some ground and Fort Harrison. That same evening he admitted that he always smoked his cigar walking about, but never on horseback. Hence my picturing him with his cigar in hand.

I congratulate you on having become the owner of that historical and, in my opinion, the most characteristic portrait of the great General. When Grant visited me, the 21st of November, 1865, he wrote in my book * of visitors:

“Visited Mr. Baling’s excellent composition on this date.

“U. S. GRANT, Lieut.-Gen. U. S. Army.

“Nov. 21st. New York City.”

The *National Tribune*, of Washington, D. C., June 17, 1886, will tell you all about that painting

* The album here referred to contains comments on his work, and many expressions of good will and the like from distinguished people.

and my introduction by Abraham Lincoln. I shall put into my album the first and last one of your kind letters. The remarkable book shall not be many years in my possession, but it will be preserved by somebody that knows how to value it. The King of Denmark wrote in it, the 22d of May, 1877, and now on the 23d of April, next Saturday, I am going to shake hands with him, as I am going to Copenhagen, being invited by the Secretary of War as his guest at the fifty years' jubilee of the battle of Schleswig.

I am old, but strong enough (although the bullet I carry in my shoulder troubles me sometimes) to work on my last commission, a painting for an altar in a church, in which was baptized Private John Widness, of Brooklyn, once a volunteer in Company I, 1st Reg. N. Y. V., proud of having his own colonel, he says, to work for him at his old church, Skibtvædt pr. Spydeberg Station.

Sincerely yours
J. A. Balling

have been opened at the offices of Mr. Hermann Linde, publisher, New York, 31 Nassau Street, for copies of a limited edition of one of the largest and most brilliant etchings ever produced in this country,

directly from the life-sized portrait of Gen. U. S. Grant by

representing

and painted by that great artist during the memorable siege from life, the painter having brought Gen. Grant a letter of introduction from President Lincoln.

It can be said, with absolute truth, that for the first time an adequate picture is offered of Gen. Grant as a soldier; it is not only a truthful and artistic picture, but the only one that was taken of him at this supreme moment of his career.

The etching is a splendid work of art, 24 x 19 inches, and is strictly limited to an

each copy signed by the etcher and printer.

These 350 proofs are issued in the following manner, and at the following prices,



The plate will be
cut into ≈
≈ 350 pieces.

U. S. GRANT IN THE TRENCHES BEFORE VICKSBURG.

One hundred on parchment at . . . \$250 each
(with 3 remarks).

One hundred and fifty on India paper at \$250 each
(with 3 remarks).

One hundred on Japan paper at . . . \$250 each
(with 3 remarks).

The entire edition is issued in luxurious style, as fine as it can be made, and worthy of the subject and the painting itself.

We absolutely guarantee

and will furnish to each subscriber a print of the *destroyed plate*, with the affidavits required.

We will also, after the edition has been printed, *cut the entire copper-plate into 350 pieces, and send to each subscriber one piece* (which will be about $1\frac{1}{3}$ in. square) *as a souvenir*, bearing the same number as the etching for which he has subscribed.

A number of copies have already been bespoken, and the term for subscription expires with December 1, 1899, after which date we reserve the right to advance the price for the remaining copies.

It has been found that the value of costly editions of this kind increases with each sale, and the final price will be largely controlled by the competitive demand.

Care has been taken to give the etching extraordinary value as a work of art. Moreover, the picture stands alone as a priceless contribution to the memory of the great commander. The history of the painting

is also uncommonly interesting, the great name of Lincoln being connected with it, and being painted by a Norwegian, then the most celebrated portrait painter in America, who served as a brave and distinguished officer in the army, and was the personal friend of Gen. Grant.

The portrait represents Gen. Grant standing

Artistic verity and fidelity to the character of the subject are the qualities that strike one in the picture at once. Balling understood the man, and demonstrated his appreciation of the fitness of things by his entire simplicity of treatment. There is in it no trace of artificiality, conventionalism, or sensationalism. Balling has fallen

in the power to convey character to canvass.

It is for his unstudied simplicity of character that Grant will be lovingly admired in history. The picture represents him as standing in the trenches, his right hand thrust loosely in his pocket, his left arm hanging almost loose by his side, with a cigar between his fingers. There is a certain carelessness in the dress, the plain uniform of a general, the vest being partly unbuttoned at top and bottom. His hat is the slouch felt of that period, unmarked by ornament.

There is no painting of Grant of any period that has such a winning countenance. There is great firmness in that aspect, and yet a judicial mildness. There is something strangely fascinating in the picture as a type of

in the critical days of strife—simple, strong, unswerving.

Gen. Grant was not a poser, and, until peace came, subjected himself with reluctance even to the camera. In later days, when the gratitude of the nation had exalted him to the supremacy, a few artists of distinction secured sittings from him, but

that exists of him of the period that may be described as the

Balling's work was accomplished to the accompaniment of the bursting of shells of the memorable siege of Vicksburg, and the paint of it was hardly dry when Grant entered the town as victor on the Fourth of July, a reference to which date will be seen in a letter from Balling herewith published.

The artist, P. H. Balling, was a Norwegian, but he was a soldier in the American cause. He had the regard of Abraham Lincoln, and it was the President's letter of introduction to Grant that secured a consent that might have been otherwise denied. Balling was in no sense employed in a mercenary venture. His heart was in it. It was also the ardent wish of Abraham Lincoln that Balling might succeed in getting a fine portrait of the great general.

as well as the artist's. Balling realized, as if by inspiration, the destiny of Grant, and was conscious that he was identifying himself with a fame that was to grow and to be lasting. The artist could foresee the greatness of his subject, but he could not foresee the unique value of his picture, which was to be without competition.

We cite from

Vol. I, in order to give the reader a concise sketch of the life and works of the artist Balling:

"Ole Peter Hansen Balling was born at Christiania, Norway, April 23, 1823; began early the study of art, and was a pupil of Johann Wunderlich and of the Berlin Academy; visited Copenhagen in 1840, Paris in 1854, and New York in 1856. At the outbreak of the Civil War he joined the 1st N. Y. V. Regiment as captain of a Swedish company, and afterwards commanded the 145th Regiment, N. Y. V., as lieu-

tenant-colonel. In 1863 he resigned, and devoted himself to art. Among his notable pictures of American subjects are Gen. Sedgwick, now at West Point; Admiral Farragut, at the Annapolis Naval Academy; Gen. George H. Thomas and Gen. Reynolds, at the Union League Club, Philadelphia; and a group of twenty-seven generals on horseback."

He is spending his old age in his native country, a man of distinction and achievements, of none of which is he prouder than his association with Gen. Grant and the struggle for our national life.

It was first contemplated to have an etching made after this remarkable painting by one of the European etchers. However, in looking around and scrutinizing the ground, there was found available talent in our own country, and from all the artists there was selected JAMES FAGAN, who occupies the very first rank among living etchers, and who had already etched a creditable smaller Grant portrait, and also two portraits of Generals Sherman and Sheridan; also many other plates of acknowledged merit, among which is that of Chief-Justice Marshall and that of Napoleon I.

But it is freely confessed by every art critic, who has seen these plates and admired them, that this etching of

is so far the crowning effort of this American artist's life, and that no living etcher could have reproduced

this historical painting by Balling in a stronger and more artistic way.

A bill has since been passed in Congress, to buy from Mr. Hermann Linde the original painting,

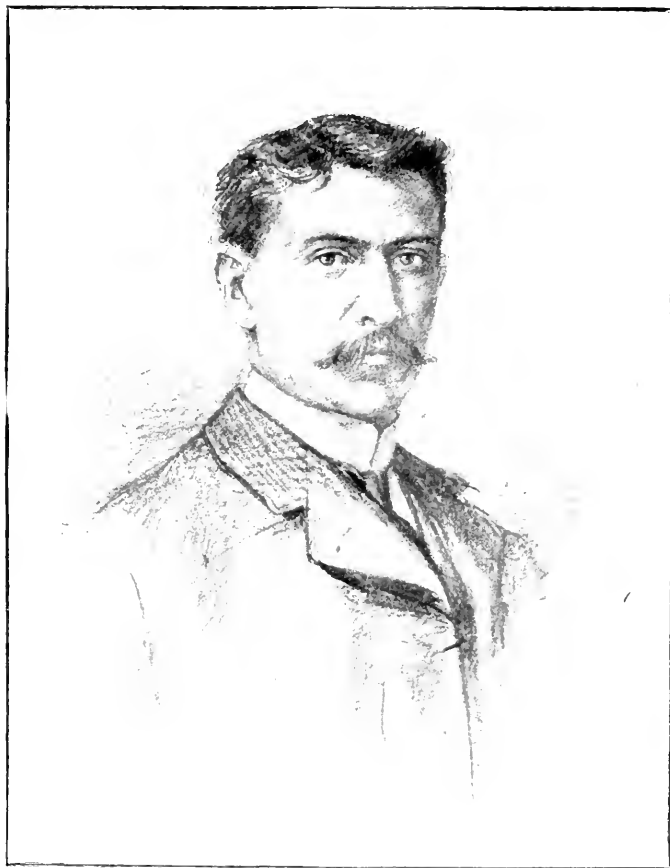
and to give the great picture a suitable place in the new Congressional Library.



which the etcher has chosen, are very appropriate, they are the three chief dwellings of the hero. The first is the house of his birth, the humble shanty at Galena, Ill. This remarque is placed in the center below the picture.

The one to the left is his second important dwelling, namely the White House, where he lived for the two terms of his presidential career.

The third one, toward the right, is his last resting place, the costly Mausoleum, erected in his honor by contributions of the whole nation at a cost of over \$600,000.



Jos. Fagan

AFTER A LEAD-PENCIL SKETCH BY THE ETCHER-
ARTIST HIMSELF.

N.Y. May 17-99

Mr. H. Lunde:

Dear Sir:

I send you, by messenger, the finished proof of Geil Brant's portrait from Mr. Ballings painting. I have succeeded beyond my expectations in reproducing the richness of the painting & consider this plate the best portrait, I have ever made.

I think you'll agree with me after you see the proof.

I remain

Sincerely yours
Geo. Tagan

THIS INDENTURE, made this thirty-first day of May, 1899, between HERMANN LINDE, of 31 Nassau Street, New York City, party of the first part; JAMES FAGAN, of Fordham, New York, party of the second part; and KIMMEL & VOIGT, of No. 242 Canal Street, New York City, parties of the third part,

Whereas the party of the first part is the owner of the original oil-painting, entitled "U. S. Grant in the Trenches Before Vicksburg," painted by P. H. Balling, and is about to publish an etching of the said painting; and,

Whereas the party of the second part has made an etching of said painting; and,

Whereas the party of the third part is about to print the plate for such etching:

Now, therefore, in consideration of the mutual covenants hereafter set forth, and the sum of one dollar each to the other in hand paid, it is agreed and covenanted as follows:

First: The total number of copies to be printed from said plate will be three hundred and fifty (350), of which one hundred will be on parchment, one hundred and fifty on India paper, and one hundred on Japan paper.

Second: All of the said three hundred and fifty (350) copies shall bear the autograph signatures of the party of the second part and the parties of the third part.

Third: The plate is to remain in the custody of the

party of the third part until the said three hundred and fifty (350) copies have all been printed, and thereafter immediately be destroyed in the presence of a notary public of the County and State of New York, and said plate is thereupon to be divided into three hundred and fifty (350) pieces, each subscriber to the etching to receive one of said pieces.

In witness whereof the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Hermann Linde

Robert H. Armstrong

James Fagan

Kimmel & Voigt

STATE OF NEW YORK, }
COUNTY OF NEW YORK, } N.Y.

On this thirty-first day of May, 1899, before me, a notary public in and for the county of New York, duly appeared HERMANN LINDE, JAMES FAGAN, and HENRY F. E. VOIGT, a member of the firm of Kimmel & Voigt, the parties described in and who executed the foregoing instrument, who, being by me duly sworn, each for himself did acknowledge the foregoing instrument for the purposes and uses therein mentioned.

Robert H. Armstrong

Hermann Linde

James Fagan
Henry F. E. Voigt

NOTARY PUBLIC,
KINGS CO., CERT. FILED N.Y. CO.





THIS IS THE ACTUAL SIZE OF TWO OF THE 350
PIECES OF THE DESTROYED PLATE.

We are living in an age in which the value of a rare portrait is probably more appreciated than at any previous period; yet it is safe to say that there are few portraits in this country which have attained to a higher valuation among historical paintings than this one. The fact that it was conceived and executed by Balling on the battlefield, himself a great artist, who at the time was the commander of a regiment, and painted at a period when the fate of our whole nation depended on the victory about to be achieved by the very man whom the painting represents as standing in the trenches before Vicksburg, must naturally enhance its value.

in New York by an art lover for a portrait of Rembrandt, *representing whom no one with certainty knows*. It is known as "The Gilder," because some one had written upon the back of it this title, and this haphazard description will remain attached to it.

Its history can be traced to Rembrandt, but not to the person represented. It is nevertheless a wonderful creation by that great master, and it is well worth \$100,000; nay, more, for even a much larger sum has been offered for it to the present owner. Why? On account of its historical *authenticity* and its *intrinsic* value as a genuine work by Rembrandt, and as representing beyond doubt a living contemporary of the master. This warrants the estimate of its value.

For Rembrandt was, without doubt, the greatest portrait painter of his time, and his historical portraits, which often represent admirals and generals of Holland, are worth still more than \$100,000 each; in fact, such portraits now owned, in most cases, by the government, are simply priceless, for, we may be sure, that these admirals and generals were portrayed by Rembrandt not only correctly and true to nature, but also with eminent artistic skill; and endowed with the finest quality of the art of painting, they are accepted by connoisseurs and in the open market at these enormous valuations.

So in this case. P. H. Balling was undoubtedly the greatest artist in this country at the time of the Civil War. He was, so to speak, the Rembrandt of this historical period, and, therefore, his portrait of the great general will live throughout the history of our nation as one of the most truthful and priceless memorials of Gen. U. S. Grant.

must naturally increase from year to year, just as our estimation of Gen. Grant's greatness has increased so far, and will increase more and more. With every bronze statue which our proud cities add to the memory of the great hero, and with every new biography which serves to familiarize us with his greatness, and with every year that lapses into the eternal space of time, there is naturally added an absolute certainty as to the historical as well as to the intrinsic value of this great painting.

At the present time the portrait representing Gen. U. S. Grant in the trenches before Vicksburg is valued by competent experts at \$50,000. And why should it not reach the valuation of \$100,000, and why not more?

And what about the actual value of this magnificent etching, which is now, for the first and only time, in a limited edition of 350 copies, distributed among a nation of seventy-five million of people?

We have to go back to Rembrandt again in order to make it clear how the value of a single etching may increase to a fabulous amount. A small portrait etched by Rembrandt, and of historical value, which was sold during his lifetime for less than forty cents a copy, brought a while ago, at the sale of Captain Halford's art treasures in London, the sum of

\$20,000. Why? Because there are in existence only a few of these historical etchings. Only a limited number were printed in the beginning, and naturally this limited number diminished from year to year through loss and damage, and the increasing scarcity of the etching, combined with the increasing fame of Rembrandt, caused the price of less than forty cents to rise to the enormous figure of \$20,000.

This only by way of illustration, but, to a certain extent, a similar appreciation in value will certainly occur in the case of this etching of Gen. Grant. There is only this limited number of 350 copies printed and distributed in a country, which is a hundred times larger and richer than Holland, the native land of Rembrandt.

The painting is copyrighted, and so is the etching. No other copy outside of this limited number of etchings can ever be obtained, and so it stands to reason, that the value of this etching must increase rapidly from year to year, and must finally become a priceless treasure and valuable object of art. Why may it not attain to a similar value, in connection with the fame of Grant, to the etching of historical interest sold from Captain Halford's collection?

And why not even more?

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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